

**Department of Michigan Historian**

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# 2017-2022 American Legion Auxiliary Programs Action Plan

## History Committee

The heart of any organization's history is in its records – items that officers, members, directors, staff, and volunteers have produced and compiled over the years. They provide unique testimony to the achievements of an organization.

Records also contribute in other ways:

- Members are able to look back and learn what efforts were successful, or unsuccessful, and why. Understanding the missteps as well as the achievements can assist in determining a future strategy.
- Exhibiting materials stimulates enthusiasm and encourages members to maintain the organization's standards and promote its future. Pride in the organization has a direct correlation to motivating the current membership to bring in new members, achieve more goals, create a sense of strength and conviction while developing leaders.
- Maintaining and preserving our records are invaluable to society by serving as informative and educational resources to a variety of potential users. In other words, an organization benefits itself and the public by preserving its records and making them available for use by everyone inside and outside the organization.

The ALA history is contained in artifacts, our documents, newspaper articles, publications, meeting minutes, photos, newsletters, written histories, etc. We do this to honor those members who have made differences in our organization at all levels. Additionally, history allows us to build a stronger organization based upon those experiences. The Cavalcade of Memories museum, as well as the library and archives located at ALA National Headquarters, serve as a resource for our members, volunteers, staff, and the general public.

### Committee Contact Information

History@ALAforVeterans.org

### What can you do?

1. **If you currently have a History/Cavalcade committee, mirror the efforts of National Headquarters to promote your history.**

### Ideas:

#### Member

- Share Auxiliary memorabilia with your unit/department.
- Ask longtime members or family of deceased members if they would like to donate an item(s).
- If you enjoy history and want to learn more, volunteer to be the History/Cavalcade chairman or committee member for your unit/department.

#### Unit and Department

- Appoint a History/Cavalcade Committee chairman. Invite members and units to participate.
- Post your unit history on the Legion's Centennial Celebration webpage at <http://centennial.legion.org/>.
- Involve your Junior members in your activities, helping them earn the History patch.
- Participate in the Members Remember project (see Resources).
- Create displays that are attractive, interesting, and relevant.
- Highlight historical/important/interesting events in your unit/department.
- Include memorabilia of your honorary Junior presidents.
- Use new technology to create and maintain digital images and records. Be sure to make more than one digital copy and store them in different places.
- Make an inventory of your entire collection. **This includes your organizational documents, written histories, scrapbooks, etc.** Be sure to include information such as who donated the item and when.
- Periodically, feature a historical item or write an article about an important time in the unit's/department's history for your newsletter.
- Attend local workshops to learn preservation and conservation methods.
- Partner with local museums, historical societies, public libraries, or local merchants for consulting and displaying.
- Ask members to consider donating or loaning important items they may have.

**2. If you do not currently have a History/Cavalcade committee and/or a Cavalcade of Memories Museum, initiate the project.**

**Ideas:**

**Members**

- Look through your own collection; assist a fellow member in searching through her collection; or search throughout the post/unit home for items.
- Gather photos and document the event(s) at which they were taken as well as the people in the photos.
- Learn the history of your unit, department, and national organization. If you do not have a written unit or department history, volunteer to help put one together.
- Determine if your materials should be displayed in the unit or department Cavalcade of Memories.
- For documents and photos, digitize them, making sure to make more than one copy and that the additional copies are stored in different places.

**Units and Departments**

- Your history is in more places than just artifacts. It is in your meeting minutes, governing documents, newspaper articles, photos, etc. Set up a system as to how these will be kept.
- Make sure you initiate a record management program. Review the records management policy sample in the Department Operations Guide to see which records you are mandated to keep permanently.
- If you have no room to keep these items, contact a local historical society, state library, or university to see if they can keep them for you.

### **3. Become visible throughout your community and let them know the ALA's history and contributions to the community, state, nation, and the world.**

#### **Ideas:**

##### **Members**

- Talk about the history of your unit/department at other community functions you attend.
- Invite people to tour your Cavalcade of Memories, photos, documents, etc.
- Tell your story. Refer to the "What's Your Story" article in Resources.

##### **Units and Departments**

- Partner with local museums, historical societies, public libraries, or university archives for consulting, displaying, and preservation advice. If there is no space available for your collection, determine if one of the above organizations may be interested in sharing some of their space for your collection.
- Invite the community and members to tour the area, familiarizing themselves with the organization's history and accomplishments.

#### **History Reporting\***

##### Mid-Year Reports

Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and are intended as an opportunity for mid-year correction. Each department History chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the national History chairman.

##### Year-End Reports

Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Each department History chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the national History chairman. Members and units should follow their department's protocol and deadlines.

*\*For deadlines and contact information, please consult the Annual Supplement to the 2017-2022 Programs Action Plan or visit the History Committee page on the national website, [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).*

#### **How To Sheets**

- How to Record Oral Histories – The Members Remember Project
- How to Celebrate Women's History Month
- How to Involve a Junior Member

#### **Additional Resources You Can Use**

- Your national History committee members (see History program page on the national website or Annual Supplement for contact information)

- March is Women’s History Month
- National Archives [www.archives.gov/preservation](http://www.archives.gov/preservation)
- Gaylord Archival [www.gaylord.com/resources](http://www.gaylord.com/resources)
- See History program page at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) for additional resources, including *What’s Your Story? The Importance of Sharing with Others and Preservation Resources*

***History is more than artifacts and/or a summary of events listed in a dusty book somewhere. As we look back on our achievements, let us make history come alive!***

## **HOW TO RECORD AND POST TO “MEMBERS REMEMBER”**

**Committee:**

History

**Contact Information for Questions:**

[History@ALAforVeterans.org](mailto:History@ALAforVeterans.org)

**Objective:**

Record the ALA’s history through the eyes of its members

### **Background Information**

The history of the American Legion Auxiliary begins back in November 1919, and continues with you. The organization’s history, like any other history, is more than names and dates. It is about its membership and how it developed the ALA’s programs and projects to fulfill our mission of serving the veterans, servicemembers, and their families who sacrifice much for this country of ours.

A written history can only tell so much. However, when an organization’s history is told through the eyes of its membership, everyone learns a great deal more about who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

### **Step-by-Step Instructions**

Here are some tips:

- This is a two-person project so find someone to assist. This is a good time to enlist the help of your 9th-12th grade Junior members as it is a required activity in earning the History Patch. If your unit does not have Junior members, enlist the assistance of college students.
- Find longtime members of the Auxiliary and ask them to share their stories in a video. These stories can be about:
  - A special project,
  - A particular highlight during her membership
  - How many generations of her family have been members and why
  - If a chartered member, her experience in starting the unit
- Find a location where it is quiet and where there will be no interruptions.





1. For electronic submissions, be sure to use letter size document. If a mailed entry, use plain, white paper, 8 1/2 x 11 in.\*

2. Page Setup:

a. Margins - Left and right margin should be 1.25 in.; top and bottom margins should be 1 in.

b. Pagination – Page numbers should begin on the first page of the historical content. They should be centered and placed 0.5 in. from the bottom of the page.

3. Spacing: Double-spaced with the exception of the Introductory pages (i.e. title page, foreword or dedication, photograph of the department president, prayer, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, first verse of “The Star Spangled Banner” and Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary), which shall be centered in the middle of the page. Paragraphs may be indented or in block form.

4. Text: 12 point font, Times New Roman or Arial style font

*\*Note: The National organization prefers electronic submissions. A history may be submitted via postal mail only if the department historian has discussed this form of entry submission with the national historian at least 30 days prior to the deadline. If a department history is submitted for the contest via postal mail, that entry will not be mailed back to the department unless the department has included a pre-paid return mailing label and return packing material along with the department’s mailed entry. Any approved mailed entry must be in a soft cover binder for loose-leaf paper, preferably blue with 2.5 inch gold foil American Legion Auxiliary seal centered on the cover or a regulation binder with imprinted seal.*

**IV. Content (70 scoring points) \_\_\_\_\_ points**

1. The ALA department annual history shall be written as a factual narrative beginning with the installation of department officers at department convention, and ending with the summary of end-of-year reports and closing events for that ALA administrative year.

2. The history shall be written in third person. Please refer to “How to Record Your Department’s History” page in the National Historian Programs Action Plan.

3. Use clear, concise language with correct spelling.

4. Do not include or use computer graphics, pen or ink drawings, illustrations, extra material, or newspaper clippings, or other embellishments.

5. You may include up to five (5) photo images placed throughout the history. (optional)

6. Be sure the department annual history truly represents a historical account of the department – what the department accomplished. A department history lists those who served as leaders and mentions notable awards or individual achievements. It is not a travelogue or diary of any officer or individual’s itineraries. The content is about the department and its collective members mission achievements.

**Total Points \_\_\_\_\_**

## **American Legion Auxiliary National History Contest Rules – Junior Members**

The recording of the American Legion Auxiliary’s history at all levels (unit, department, and national) is important so that everyone will know who we are, what we do, and why we matter. To emphasize this

point, the ALA National organization annually conducts a National History Contest, one for senior (adult) members and a separate contest for Junior members. The purpose is to encourage departments to preserve their history at both membership levels.

Following are the rules regarding formatting and content along with information as to how the entries are scored. Department histories are to be sent to and judged by the respective national division vice president. The winning entry for each division will be submitted to the national historian who determines the overall winner of the annual history contest.

Each department is encouraged to submit an entry for the National History Contest and should include the following information:

Division \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_

Department Junior Historian's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

Department Junior Historian's Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

#### **Department History Contest Deadline:**

A department history **MUST BE RECEIVED** by the appropriate national division vice president **NO LATER than June 24, 2022** to be eligible for judging.

#### **Department History Contest Content and Scoring**

The entries will be judged and scored according to the following criteria:

**Score:**

I. **Introduction, Inclusions** (10 scoring points) \_\_\_\_\_ **points**

1. Title Page

- a. American Legion Auxiliary Department of \_\_\_\_\_ Junior History
- b. ALA department administrative year mo/yr to mo/yr
- c. Name of honorary department Junior historian

2. Foreword or dedication

3. A prayer

4. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

5. First verse of "The Star Spangled Banner"

6. Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary

II. **Department Information** (10 scoring points) \_\_\_\_\_ points

1. List of elected and/or appointed honorary department Junior officers for the current administrative year
2. Photograph of honorary department Junior president (optional, black & white or color, not to exceed 5 x 7 in.)
3. List of the five (5) honorary national Junior division vice presidents for the current administrative year
4. List of department or national Junior awards received during the year
5. The typed name/title and written signature (typed signature if submitting it electronically) of the honorary department Junior historian should immediately follow the final paragraph of the history.
6. Index (optional)

III. **Appearance** (10 scoring points) \_\_\_\_\_ points

Department histories should be submitted electronically according to the following specifications:

1. For electronic submissions, be sure to use the letter size document. If a mailed entry, use plain, white paper, 8 ½ x 11 in.\*
2. Page Setup:
  - a. Margins - Left and right margins should be 1.25 in.; top and bottom margins should be 1 in.
  - b. Pagination – Page numbers should begin on the first page of the historical content. They should be centered and placed 0.5 in. from the bottom of the page.
3. Spacing: Double-spaced with the exception of the Introductory pages (i.e. title page, foreword or dedication, photograph of the honorary department Junior historian, prayer, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, first verse of “The Star Spangled Banner” and Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion Auxiliary), which shall be centered in the middle of the page. Paragraphs may be indented or in block form.
4. Text: 12 point font, Times New Roman or Arial style font

*\*Note: The National organization prefers electronic submissions. A history may be submitted via postal mail only if the department historian has discussed this form of entry submission with the national historian at least 30 days prior to the deadline. If a department history is submitted for the contest via postal mail, that entry will not be mailed back to the department unless the department has included a pre-paid return mailing label and return packing material along with the department’s mailed entry. Any approved mailed entry must be in a soft cover binder for loose-leaf paper, preferably blue with 2.5 inch gold foil American Legion Auxiliary seal centered on the cover or a regulation binder with imprinted seal.*

IV. **Content** (70 scoring points) \_\_\_\_\_ points

1. The ALA department Junior history shall be written as a factual narrative beginning with the installation of department Junior officers and ending with the summary of end-of-year reports and closing events for that administrative year.

2. The history shall be written in third person. Please refer to “How to Record Your Department’s History” page in the National Historian Programs Action Plan for guidance.

3. Use clear, concise language with correct spelling.

4. Do not include or use computer graphics, pen or ink drawings, illustrations, extra material, or newspaper clippings, or other embellishments.

5. You may include up to five (5) photo images placed throughout the history. (optional)

6. Be original and unique in thought and presentation

7. Be sure the department annual history truly represents a historical account of the department – what the department accomplished. A department Junior history lists those who served as leaders and mentions notable awards of individual achievements. It is not a travelogue or diary of any officer or individual’s itineraries. The content is about the department and its collective members mission achievements.

**Total Points** \_\_\_\_\_

***Special 100th Anniversary Program History Facts:***

The History Committee was created by resolution at the 1972 National Convention.

Originally named the Cavalcade of Memories Committee, it began as a curator committee of three to collect, display and care for artifacts of national interest of the American Legion Auxiliary, donated for the new Cavalcade of Memories Museum located at ALA National Headquarters. The committee name changed to reflect that the Auxiliary’s history is contained not only in these artifacts, but also in its photos, books, and governing documents, which require care as well. While the committee is still committed to collecting items of national importance for the museum and archives, the main focus of the committee has evolved to assisting departments and units in the collection and care of their important histories.

**Department History Contest Awards** - We encourage Units and Districts to participate in the Department History Contest Awards. Narratives and scrapbooks will be judged on the following:

- a. Introduction
- b. Historical Content
- c. Appearance
- d. Arrangement
- e. Deadline

**Historian Awards:**

- 1. History Book Narrative Awards;
  - a. **Dorthy Goetz Citation** -District submitting the best District History
  - b. **Judge Paul V. Gadola Citation** - Unit submitting the best Unit History

c. **Baynes - Campell Citation** -Most outstanding coverage of the American Legion  
Auxiliary calander of activities

d. **Marie Scrumf Citation** - Best JR. History submission

2. History Scapbook Awards:

a. **Loretta Fisher Citation** - District submitting best District scrapbook

b. **Dorothy Stacy Citation** - Unit submitting best Unit scrapbook

c. **Kay Mishler Citation** - Best JR. scrapbook

d. **Nora T Wilson- Abyss Citation** - Best History summary

**\* SEE RULES AND SCORE SHEET \***